



Using the Relational Language Skill Steps to Engage, Connect and Collaborate with Girls and Women

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Relational Language Skills Steps fall into two main categories: Engaging/Connecting and Collaborative Action Planning.

Part I: Engagement and Connection

Step 1: Anticipate and Explore - Why might she be saying/doing this?

Step 2: Acknowledge - What might she be feeling?

Step 3: Validate - Validate her experience.

Step 4: Reflect - What do you hear her saying?

Part II: Collaborative Action Planning

Step 5: Reflect her position.

Step 6: Reflect/explore relevant parameters/limits.

Step 7: Generate Solutions - Review strengths and barriers and brainstorm solutions with her.

Step 8: Stay Positive - Encourage the client to pick an option and then remain involved and supportive by checking in with her.

*The first four steps allow us to demonstrate that we truly understand our female clients – this solidifies our connection with them. The last four steps then flow much easier. Setting limits and exploring realistic options while remaining positive happens more successfully in the context of a healthy and respectful connection.
(Benedict, 2002)*